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ADLAI EWING STEVENSON.

General Adlai Ewing Stevenson died June 14, 1914, at a hospital in Chicago, where he had been taken for medical treatment from his home in Bloomington, Illinois. Thus passed from the stage of American public life a man who had honorably filled a great part in the history of his country.

Adlai Ewing Stevenson, like many distinguished Illinoisans, was born in Kentucky. He was born in Christian County, Kentucky, October 23, 1835, the son of John T. and Eliza (Ewing) Stevenson. The older Stevenson in 1852 removed with his family to Bloomington, McLean County, Illinois. In his new home Mr. Stevenson found friends and relatives who had preceded him to Illinois. The youth, Adlai, attended the public schools of Bloomington and the Wesleyan University, and later he attended Center College at Danville, Kentucky.

In 1857 he was admitted to the bar and began the practice of law at Metamora, Woodford County, Illinois. As was the case of all young lawyers in those days he had a natural interest in public affairs. His first public office was that of master-in-chancery, which position he filled from 1861 to 1865. In 1865 he was elected state's attorney of Woodford County and he served the people in that capacity until 1869. In 1864 he was nominated for presidential elector on the democratic ticket, but was with the rest of his ticket defeated at the polls. In 1869 he decided to return to Bloomington, where he formed a partnership with James S. Ewing in the practice of law. He was married on December 20, 1866, to Miss Letitia Green, the younger daughter of Rev. Lewis W. Green, president of Center College, Danville, Kentucky. The marriage took place at the residence of Matthew T. Scott, at Chenoa, Illinois, Mrs. Scott being the sister of Mrs. Stevenson.

When he returned to Bloomington in 1869 he was, of course, accompanied by his young wife. They there founded a home within whose walls for more than forty years they dispensed a simple and dignified though hearty hospitality.

In 1874 he was first elected to a seat in Congress. He was defeated for re-election in 1876 by Judge Thomas F. Tipton, but was again elected in 1878. In 1877 he was appointed by President Hayes a member of the Board of Visitors to the West Point Military Academy.

He was appointed by Mr. Cleveland during his first term first assistant postmaster-general, and served from 1885 to 1889. While serving in this capacity he made for himself a national reputation, and became a favorite with the members of his party throughout the United States. He was appointed by President McKinley a member of the Bimetallic Congress held in Belgium in 1897.

He was a member of the National Democratic Conventions of 1884 and 1892 and in the latter convention he was chairman of the Illinois delegation.

At this convention, which was held at Chicago, he was nominated for vice-president of the United States on the ticket of which Grover Cleveland was the head. This ticket was elected, and he became by virtue of his office presiding officer of the United States Senate.

In this office his peculiar qualities of mind and heart served him in good stead. He had a charming manner and was most courteous and affable and he greatly endeared himself to the members of the distinguished body over which he presided. His was a judicial temperament, and he was not easily ruffled, and seldom lost his temper.

His association with Mr. Cleveland during their respective terms of office was a close and delightful one.

In the book of reminiscences published by General Stevenson in 1909, he pays a high tribute to Mr. Cleveland, the man, the president and the patriot, in a sketch entitled, "Cleveland as I Knew Him."

At the close of his term as vice-president, March 4, 1897, he returned to his home in Bloomington and resumed the practice of law and the management of his personal affairs, but he did not long remain in retirement, for in 1900 he was again nominated for vice-president of the United States. This convention was held at Kansas City and William Jennings Bryan was nominated for president. Mr. Bryan and General Stevenson were defeated by their republican opponents, William McKinley and Theodore Roosevelt.

In 1908 General Stevenson was the nominee of the democratic party for the office of governor of the State of Illinois. He was defeated by Charles S. Deneen by a very small majority.

General Stevenson was devoted to his home and family and to his friends, and he was most fortunate in his domestic relations. To Mr. and Mrs. Stevenson were born four children, one son and three daughters.

Of these children, Lewis Green Stevenson, Mrs. Julia Stevenson Hardin, the wife of Rev. M. N. Hardin, a distinguished Presbyterian clergyman of Chicago, and Miss Letitia Stevenson, survive their parents. The eldest daughter, Mary, died when just entering womanhood, December, 1892, and just before General Stevenson's inauguration as vice-president of the United States. Mrs. Stevenson died December 25, 1913, and was survived by her husband less than six months.

General Stevenson was a student of American history and he was particularly interested in the history of Kentucky and Illinois—his native State and the State of his adoption. As a lawyer and a statesman he made a study of legal and constitutional questions.

General Stevenson was an honorary member of the Illinois State Historical Society and took much interest in the activities of the Society and twice delivered addresses before it. He also took part in 1908 in the celebration of the semi-centennial of the Lincoln-Douglas debates. He delivered addresses at Galesburg and at Alton. In 1903 General Stevenson delivered the annual address before the Illinois

State Historical Society. His subject was, "The Constitutions and Constitutional Conventions of Illinois." This able address was an account of Illinois from the beginning of European exploration, with special reference to its government and law. This paper has been widely read and quoted and is today practically a text-book for students of the constitutional history of the State.

January, 1908, Mr. Horace White and General Stevenson were the chief orators of the Society's annual meeting. Mr. White gave a brilliant address entitled "Abraham Lincoln in 1854," and General Stevenson gave an eloquent address on Stephen A. Douglas.

This annual meeting will long be remembered on account of the fact that these distinguished men were the guests of the Society and by the profound and remarkable addresses which were delivered by them.

General Stevenson's book, already mentioned, was published by A. C. McClurg & Company, Chicago, 1909, under the title "Something of Men I Have Known." This title well describes the volume, but it does not give an idea of the charm of the book, the fund of reminiscences, and of delightful anecdotes of persons noted in the annals of the United States and particularly of Illinois and Kentucky.

General Stevenson was a gentleman of the old school, a type now all too rare. He was an ideal citizen. His domestic life was most happy. He lived with his wife for forty-seven years, from their marriage December 20, 1866, until the death of Mrs. Stevenson December 25, 1913. Around them clustered all that makes life beautiful—children, grandchildren, a beautiful home of peace and plenty, the friendship and respect of their neighbors.

Mr. Stevenson's public life was free from taint of scandal. His ideals were high and pure and he attempted to live up to them.

In closing this brief sketch of the life of Adlai E. Stevenson and summing up his career, no better estimate of his character

can be given than the words which he himself used in closing his sketch of Grover Cleveland :

“In victory or defeat, in office or out, he was true to his own self and to his ideals. His early struggles, his firmness of purpose, his determination that knew no shadow of wavering, his exalted aims, and the success that ultimately crowned his efforts, have given him high place among statesmen, and will be a continuing inspiration to the oncoming generations of his countrymen.”